

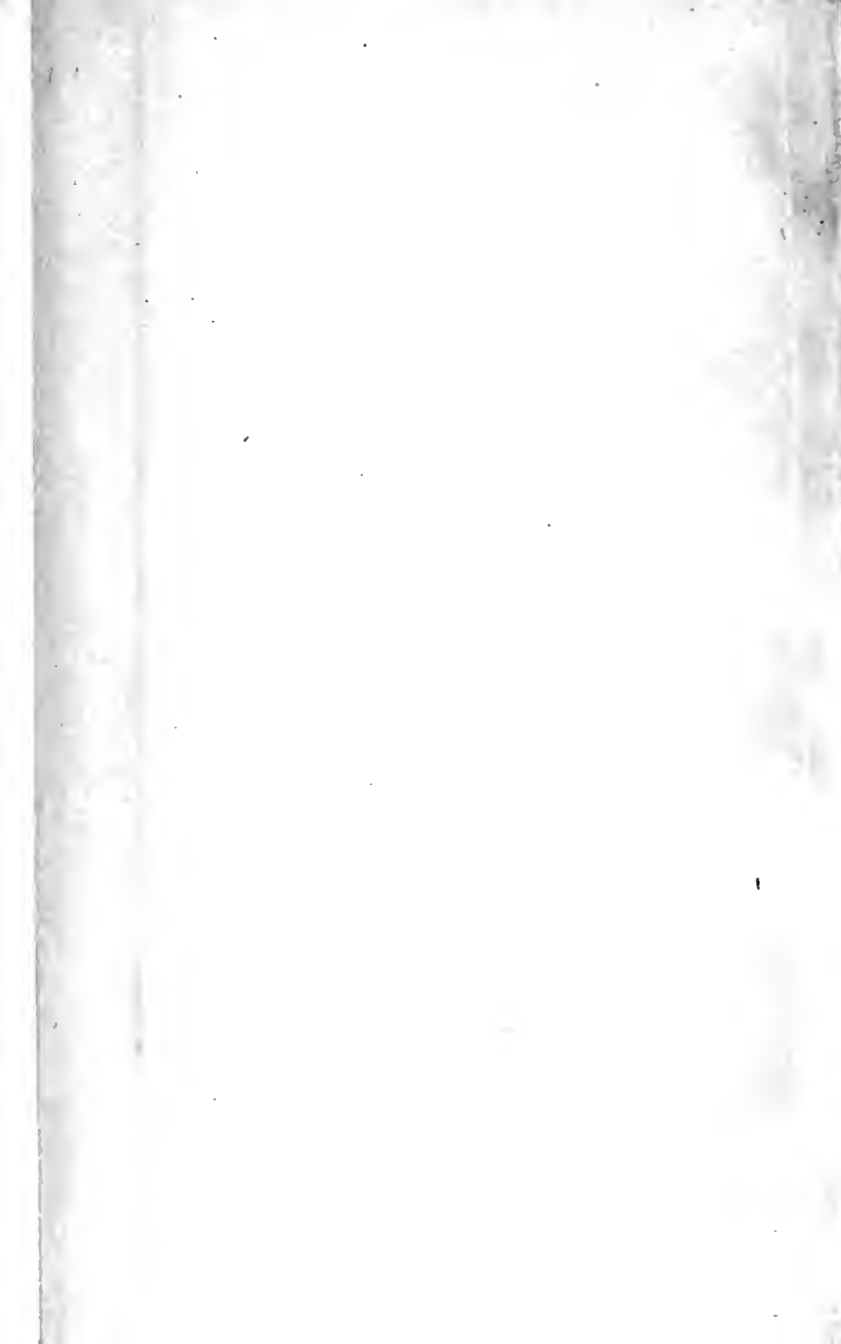
**SOME MEMORIES OF
MRS. WOODHOUSE**

SHEFFIELD HIGH SCHOOL, 1878-1898

CLAPHAM HIGH SCHOOL, 1898-1912

By AGNES S. PAUL, M.A.





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OF

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Sheffield High School, 1878-1898

Clapham High School, 1898-1912

BY

AGNES S. PAUL, M.A.

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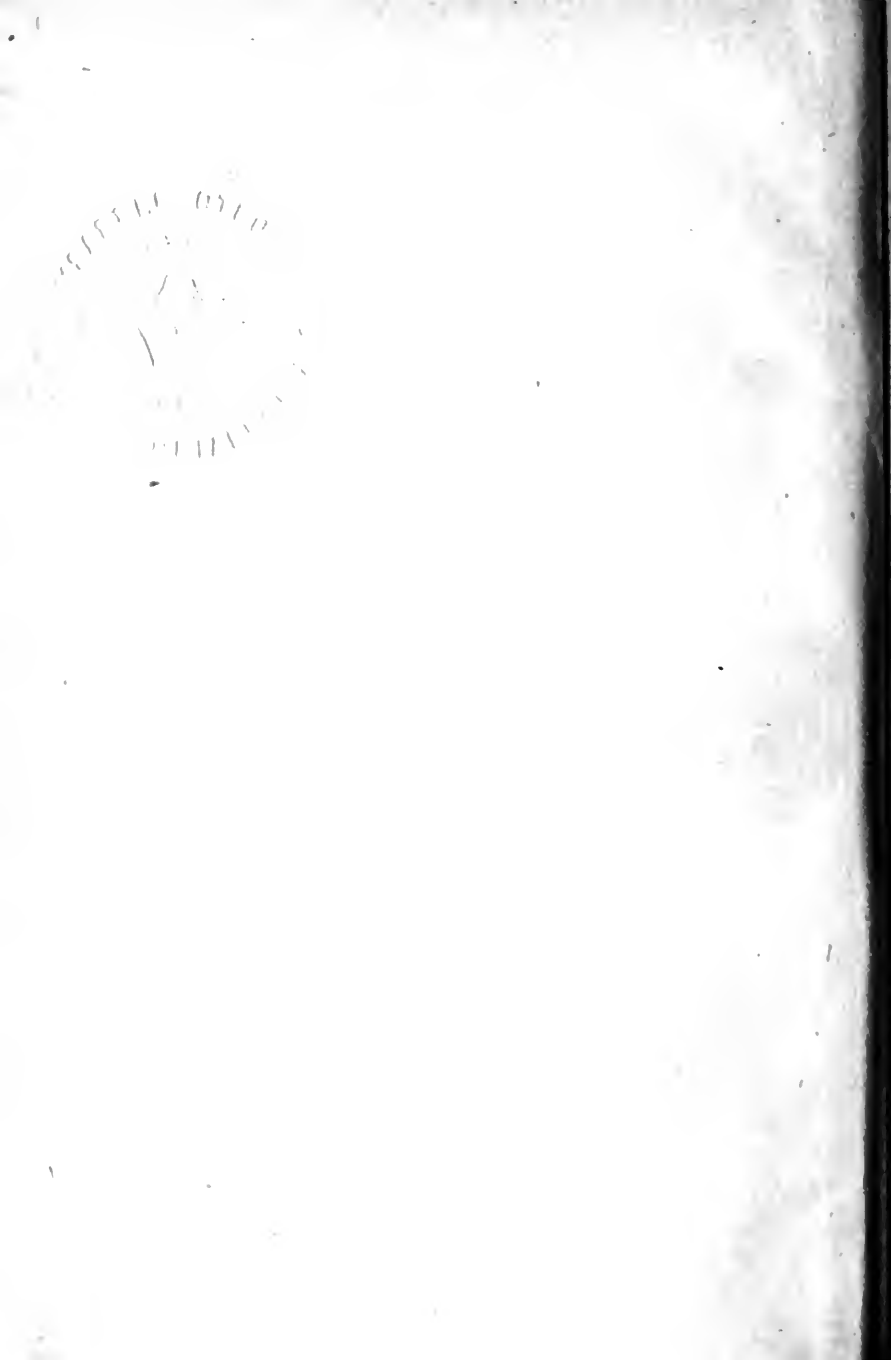


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Some Memories of Mrs. Woodhouse.

IN putting together this short collection of memories of Mrs. Woodhouse, I have been influenced not only by the desire of her many friends who have begged to have it, but by my own strong conviction that it is a real duty, a wise conservation of spiritual energy, to gather up and hand on the elements of good which have been generated and liberated by a life such as hers. When all is said and done, it seems as if that is the way in which illumination and redemption in all degrees are effected—by the carrying over of great ideals from the misty region of the abstract into the terms of a human personality. We never seem to outgrow the age for object-lessons, or the need of them. This is the justification for trying to set out the significance of the individual life with all its personal bearings—seen from first one angle and then another; and I have accordingly put down just as far as I could what Mrs. Woodhouse stood for in my own eyes, redressing the balance by adding at the end an appendix, giving impressions from other sources. The appendix, like the true woman's P.S. to a letter, has turned out to be the substantial part: in it will be found many extracts from letters, quotations from official documents, and passages from Mrs. Woodhouse's own educational addresses. I hope that all taken together may succeed in conveying some not wholly inadequate impression of her personality.

As I look back upon her life, trying to read its lasting significance, my predominant feeling emerges as a grateful sense of real refreshment and reinforcement of spirit. "The spirit giveth life" is a thought that rises spon-

taneously with the remembrance of her. She would have called herself (if she ever stopped to call herself anything, which I should doubt) an idealist, understanding the word in the plain, ingenuous, un-metaphysical sense of a person who is not a materialist—whose values are not to be calculated in terms of things that perish with the using. A world quite different from that in which material things count, and dominate, and choke, and oppress, was obviously *real* to her, and herein lay one cause of that releasing and upspringing of the spirit which contact with her brought.

Another very powerful cause was the extraordinary degree to which her desire to help and serve was developed. One of her friends wrote of her: "A lifetime of devoted service had formed the habit of an instant response to every call for help." That is true—the capacity grew with practice; but from the first, one feels, her eyes must have been eagerly looking for the opportunities of loving serviceableness, which later came in such numbers through her special work. The letters will show how Mrs. Woodhouse's friends keep recurring to this sort of quality in her; they speak of her motherliness, her protectiveness, and many other forms in which the desire to help showed itself. Magnanimous, generous, and considerate, she found an extraordinarily wide field over which to exercise her impulse towards service—the small roughnesses and unevennesses on the surface of life called out her sympathy as well as the more dramatic experiences of great joy or great grief. How well I remember some of her wise, terse counsels about these surface roughnesses that cause the feet of the average wayfarer to stumble! If you were wasting time in a hurried feverish scramble to get things through, no matter how, she was ready with the sensible word: "My dear, put everything in the place *where it is going to stay*." . . . "Don't *you* do that, dear" (then with apologetic quotation-marks in her voice, for she despised no human

being)—“don’t you know a person of less intellect can do that?” One of her much-attached secretaries, who caught her spirit, would say to me in later days, when I succeeded to the headship of Clapham High School, “Do let me do that; why keep a dog and bark yourself?” That showed the same companionable, considerate temper which made delightful little green oases in the desert of routine. And in the deeper experiences, too, the upheavals caused by some overwhelming sorrow, or some sudden challenge of difficulty, Mrs. Woodhouse was a friend just as “good at need” to those under her care; her sympathy flowed out, heartfelt but wholesome, telling always against morbidness and the self-regarding habit even in the moment when it poured balm on a fresh wound.

The word “companionable,” which came into my mind with the recollection of such incidents, gives the key to much in Mrs. Woodhouse’s nature. She went through life in the true spirit of companionship. Her social creed one must describe as “democratic” for want of a better word: but she did not, I should say, think in terms of the rule of the people so much as of the purpose of God *for* the people, and of their faculty, divinely implanted as she believed, for being right in the long run when they follow their own inner light. She had an instinctive confidence in the rightness of the main judgments of humanity; she therefore respected and observed many social *conventions*, though of social *distinctions* and class-feeling she had an absolute intolerance, and would speak of them, in days long before such opinions became politic or fashionable, with an almost passionate repudiation. Her sanity, her balance, made her indeed a sort of touchstone of what right-thinking public opinion would turn out to be: she could, and did, anticipate it in very many instances. Such a power of intuition is often associated in people’s minds with time-serving and opportunism, and is liable to be looked coldly upon: it is very easy for the critics of

those gifted with it to say that they may always be trusted to know how the cat will jump. Mrs. Woodhouse nearly always did; but, unlike the Machiavellian (so-called) who waits with sinister patience to profit by the jump, you might picture her rather as anxiously and sympathetically straining her whole force to make the perplexed creature jump the right way. Would that all those endowed with a like acuteness of intuition were as well safeguarded by the love of their kind! All such keen instruments can do harm; but on her foil there was a button that was a fixture, however agile the use of the weapon—she would never hurt, nor score by another's disadvantage.

It is obvious that anyone endowed to this extent with intuition, vision, and the desire to help and serve others, would find in the work of education an outlet and a means of self-expression which perhaps no other work could so well have provided. But at first Mrs. Woodhouse's destiny did not appear to lie along these lines. She was scarcely more than a girl when she was married, and her married life was one of complete happiness but of tragically brief duration. Her husband was an engineer, of a family already distinguished in that direction, a wide reader, whose mental companionship seems to have had an endlessly stimulating effect on her. Both were lovers of the country, and in particular of the exquisite Cornish country—they had gone to live at Port Isaac when Mr. Woodhouse's health gave way. Mrs. Woodhouse had, an early friend tells me, "the most devoted love and admiration for him and his character—a life-long devotion." Even without being told, her friends of later years would have known from her whole outlook on life that her husband's memory and personality were a continuous influence with her.

Married life in itself gives an experience which must be a tremendous asset in undertaking the education of either girls or boys, but her particular married

life left her in possession of a specially valuable legacy for her future work. She struck me always as having a singularly happy and healthy way of thinking, and teaching girls to think, about marriage and family life. One of her friends who was closely associated with her in her professional life has spoken of how noticeably men trusted her as well as feeling her charm—a natural and happy effect, no doubt, of her having found that she could absolutely trust her husband. Her way of working harmoniously with men, whether it was in dealing with parents or in her public work on committees, was very characteristic of her. It was not exactly the *bonne camaraderie* of a rather later generation; it was something perhaps even more charming, something that gave a delightful effect of mutual dependence and deference, of the filling up of one another's deficiencies and the acknowledging of one another's gifts. She was in this way distinctly feminine, but not in the artful sense of the word. For though I have heard girls say that Mrs. Woodhouse could "turn father round her little finger," it was not so much that she set out to do it as that "father" responded to a different aspect of things when presented to him: he came, saw, and was conquered. "Mother" was sometimes a tougher proposition, but with her, too, things usually began with a firm alliance for the child's good, and ended more often than not in an appreciative personal friendship.

The interruption of a married life of such unusual happiness must have meant no ordinary sorrow. Mrs. Woodhouse found herself, at the age of twenty-three, left a widow with her only child, the daughter with whom her whole life was from that time bound up, who was always first in all her thoughts, and who grew up to show, in her own independent life-work, gifts which bear witness to a rich endowment from both father and mother. Soon after the loss of her husband Mrs. Woodhouse turned her thoughts to the idea of teaching, and began to study with that end in view.

Just about this time great changes had been and were taking place in the shaping of educational ideals for women and girls. It was the period following on the foundation of the first of the women's colleges, and it marked a real epoch, a real deliverance from a state of things which it is hard for us even to conceive nowadays without some trouble. We have lived through a period of some reaction since then; we have seen what began as emancipation threatening to pass into new forms of tyranny, and education sometimes laying on rather feeble shoulders burdens too grievous to be borne. But that must not be suffered to hide the real and immense change for the better which took place between, say, 1860 and 1880. It was a sort of shaking loose from an irrational and intolerable system—or want of system would be a truer description—a mere “fortuitous concourse” of the elements that went to decide the average woman's destiny. *The Times* not long ago had a charming leading article called “The Passing of Victorian Silver,” in which reference was made to the vanished age when submissive daughters of the house might be relied upon for the weekly or bi-weekly orgy of polishing. One would not suggest that the polishing itself is either intolerable or irrational: most women really love a bit of domestic work, which fact is part of the tragedy of our present stupid *impasse* about domestic service: but how terribly cramping was the standard which exacted it in such utter disproportion to other things! Under-nourishment is a very real and grievous trouble, for the mind no less than for the body. Let anyone who has ceased to realize how grievous read Charlotte Brontë's burning words in “*Shirley*,” when she makes Caroline Helstone soliloquize on her own lot and that of the numerous families of girls in her neighbourhood. “The brothers of these girls are every one in business or in professions; their sisters have no earthly employment, but household work and sewing; no earthly pleasure but an unprofitable visiting; and no hope in all their life to come of anything

better. . . . They are never well ; and their minds and views shrink to wondrous narrowness. The great wish—the sole aim of every one of them is to be married, but the majority will never marry : they will die as they now live. They scheme, they plot, they dress to ensnare husbands. The gentlemen turn them into ridicule : they don't want them : they hold them very cheap : they say—I have heard them say it with sneering laughs many a time—the matrimonial market is overstocked. Fathers are angry with their daughters when they observe their manœuvres : they order them to stay at home. What do they expect them to do at home ? If you ask—they would answer, sew and cook. They expect them to do this, and this only, contentedly, regularly, and uncomplainingly, all their lives long, as if they had no germs of faculties for anything else : a doctrine as reasonable to hold, as it would be that the fathers have no faculties but for eating what their daughters cook, or for wearing what they sew. Could men live so themselves ? Would they not be very weary ? And when there came no relief to their weariness, but only reproaches at its slightest manifestation, would not their weariness ferment in time to frenzy ?”

This, I think, is really a fair picture of the state of things which those interested in the higher education of women set out to remedy. There were, of course, always exceptions in the individual lives of many women, even single women, perhaps more gifted or more fortunate than the majority ; but this was the average beaten track. The new phase of women's mental and educational development had fairly set in in the eighties, and quite soon the current was moving strongly towards a somewhat ill-judged and one-sided mark—that of claiming for women not only the same rights, but the same conditions of self-expression as men. Whether this was the effect or the cause of girls' education being planned to follow closely on the lines of boys', and towards a strained “equality” with them, I am not qualified to judge ; but, at any rate,

that was what happened, and this was the *mise-en-scène* of Mrs. Woodhouse's early professional work. She was launched fairly in the tideway of the blue-stocking movement, and nothing shows the essential excellence of her judgment more than the way in which she handled the dangers and opportunities of so unsettled a time. One of her Sheffield friends, describing her work in that city, calls her "the upholder and promoter of women's place and *right to serve in the world's affairs*" ("right to serve," by the way, is very characteristic: so many people want other kinds of rights!). But her upholding and promoting was never fanatical or competitive in spirit, and her influence was used consistently to inspire her girls with an ideal that was comprehensively womanly, and give them an outlook sensible as well as liberal.

This may be the best place to return to Mrs. Woodhouse's personal history, and finish the very brief outline of it which is necessary as a background for her professional work. Her preparation for teaching, when once she had decided that this was to be her career, was done at the North London Collegiate School under Miss Buss; from there she went to teach at the Middle School, Clapham, making thus early the acquaintance of a neighbourhood which was to see her distinguished later labours. There was, however, to be a long intervening period. A large part of her life work was devoted to Sheffield, where her memory is to this day affectionately cherished, though it is over twenty-five years since she left it.

A great number of the letters and other material added at the end have to do with the Sheffield part of Mrs. Woodhouse's career, and they show better than I have any means of doing the value of her work there. The Girls' Public Day School Company's Sheffield school was in its infancy when she went there, in March 1878, originally as a member of the staff under Miss Alger. When Miss Alger was transferred to the new G.P.D.S.C. school at Dulwich, Mrs. Woodhouse was, after a brief

term of service as an assistant mistress (only from March to July 1878), appointed to succeed to the headship of Sheffield, and there for twenty years of full and brilliant activity she carried on the work, of which the letters I have just mentioned convey some impression.

In 1898 there came the invitation from her Council to go to London and take up the critical work of carrying on at Clapham a school which already had a very distinguished history and a wonderful standard of scholarship, and which, moreover, was later to combine in itself what had been two separate schools, originally supplying different needs. In 1898 the Modern School at Clapham, which represented the original "Middle School" referred to before, was closed and was merged in the High School. Mrs. Woodhouse succeeded Miss O'Connor, who had been head mistress since 1882, and had set the high standard for which Clapham High School was already well known.

Many details, I may say in passing, which there is no space to put down here, and which yet bear intimately on Mrs. Woodhouse's life and work, are to be found in the "Jubilee Book" of the Girls' Public Day School Trust, a valuable summary of the history of girls' higher education since 1870, published last year to mark the jubilee of the foundation of the Trust's first schools. Mrs. Woodhouse's whole relationship with her governing body, the Council of the Trust, throughout her long and prosperous term of service—thirty-four years—as one of their head mistresses, was broad-based on mutual confidence. She, I know, endorsed every word of the appreciation expressed by the Trust's head mistresses at a gathering at Kensington High School last November, in which one is glad to think she took part: it was less than two months before her death. I quote only a few sentences from the addresses made on that day, but they will show the attitude of understanding and confidence existing between the head mistresses and their Council, of whose education committee Mrs. Woodhouse had soon after her retirement from Clap-

ham become a member. "Our Council . . . have consistently encouraged initiative and experiment in their head mistresses, and have shown a generous confidence in them which has inspired those so trusted with a spirit of loyal and strenuous service. We have learned to count upon . . . their encouragement in anxiety, help in trouble, and support in need . . . the ideals, traditions, and methods for which they are responsible have been one of the great influences in the re-shaping of English education." Mrs. Woodhouse greatly appreciated the opportunity of sharing in the Council's educational work, and up to within a very few days of her death she continued to be actively connected with their plans for the schools. Their resolution passed at the time of her death will be found printed on page 47, and along with passages from letters will show how they valued her as a colleague.

With her taking over of the headship of Clapham High School, which she held with steadily increasing success until her retirement in 1912, Mrs. Woodhouse entered on a wider range of rapidly-changing conditions and complicated problems. To her new task she brought the same qualities as at Sheffield, and I fancy that the germ of her educational policy and success was present from the beginning. Her personal history becomes from this point more and more merged in her educational work, so that, except for certain landmarks which will be spoken of each in their own connexion, such as her Presidency of the Head Mistresses' Association from 1907-09, there is little to tell by way of completing even the simplest outline of her life. It is at her educational ideals that we must look if we want an impression of how her strenuous days were filled and what their outcome was.

From 1903 onwards, it has been said, the new secondary school system of England was shaped out. Its shaping offered to any keen and progressive-minded head of a school, whether man or woman, a field full of opportunities, full also of risks and pitfalls. I have spoken

already of the significance of Mrs. Woodhouse's social creed; its large-heartedness and elasticity were invaluable now. She was quite at home in the midst of changing needs and what then appeared revolutionary legislation. She was not unduly worried by having to admit a percentage of elementary scholars, though she did worry (in a way highly profitable to them) if their use of the opportunities offered to them was poor, or if they resisted or resented the sometimes necessary advice as to reform in manners, or speech, or outlook. She made them feel that she *would* have their good, and that they must help her to help them. Possibly one of her very best pieces of work was her drawing together of schools and teachers of different types. Besides her more systematic, solid efforts "to build a bridge between sections of the profession of teaching which had long been separated," she worked continuously among individuals to attain this end. She would put herself to great trouble and fatigue in giving garden parties and "At Homes" to allow of all the teachers in a given neighbourhood meeting each other, and her parties were a success because she had no professional manner, but was delicately perceptive and full of tact and sympathy. Her great desire to further the work of the society which started, I believe, as the Empire Guild of Teachers, then became the Teachers' Christian Union, and is now absorbed into the Auxiliary of the Student Christian Movement, was due largely to this genuine social benevolence—partly also to a strong conviction which she held, and always tried to act upon in her government of her own schools, that teachers of all types should set themselves to work on a spiritual basis for the whole of education. This idea comes out very strongly in one of her addresses quoted on page 31. One of the most interesting Conferences I ever attended was very largely the result of her efforts—it was a Teachers' Christian Union gathering at Swanwick, numbering, I think, some two hundred, at which the present Bishops of

Liverpool and Manchester, among other distinguished leaders in education, gave most inspiring help. There Mrs. Woodhouse, though not at all a typical "Conference woman," was in her element, surrounded by people she either wanted to do good to or to cause to do good to each other!

It must not be thought, however, that, though her taste did not lie in the direction of much publicity, she either neglected her necessary public work or found it uncongenial. On the contrary, in certain official capacities she was extremely good—for instance, as a member of deputations or delegations: she was firm and even persistent in putting her case, but never combative, and she had that invaluable gift, an ever-present awareness of the other person's point of view. One of the deputations in which she took a conspicuous part was that to the Board of Education in 1909 on the employment of women inspectors, when she put forward a plea for them based mainly on the ground of a better correlation of elementary and secondary school work. On this occasion she was acting as representative of the Head Mistresses' Association, for in 1907 her fellow heads had marked their appreciation of her gifts and her services to education by electing her their President for the two following years. On page 27 extracts will be found from her two chief addresses to that body.

While, then, she did not shrink from necessary public speaking, she was not really, in the formal and technical sense, a very good speaker. Her argument, clear in her own rapidly-working mind, she would never stop to elaborate, or even to arrange. All the same, she compassed her main end by getting into real touch with her audience. It was by virtue of her whole personality that she "got across" what she had to say, impressing it graphically by the aid of gesture and expression. She had wonderfully mobile and expressive hands, and her friends will remember their quick movements—movements not in

the least purposeless or nervy, but like a *moto perpetuo* on some musical instrument, a running accompaniment to the thread of her words. Another thing which counted with an audience was the individuality and charm of her way of dressing, always graceful and harmonious. She was always distressed when she met any of her old girls who did not know how to dress and hold themselves, or who had anything freakish or mannish about them. "Dear me," she would say, "isn't it *sad* to see people looking so strangely awkward? No grace, no softness . . . *why* do they do it, my dear?" in a real, troubled search for what she had omitted in their education to make it possible for them to present such a poor front to the world.

The fact that her public speaking did not do full justice to her views and thoughts should not be suffered to obscure the definiteness and solid content of those thoughts themselves. It does not by any means follow with the inevitability on which people touchingly rely that the perfectly clear speaker is the solid thinker. One may hear—it is only too possible—graceful and eloquent exposition so clear as to ring hollow of all content whatever! Mrs. Woodhouse's plans and ideas, though both elusively and allusively expressed, were quite strictly harnessed to practical considerations. For instance, about the standing and prospects of her own profession she had a clear and practical policy. She felt very strongly that the professional efficiency of teachers should be secured by training (if possible closely connected with practice in a school) and recognized by registration. Much thought and labour was expended by her on the registration question. She worked eagerly and continuously for the ideals of the Teachers Registration Council, on which, at its first formation, she was the member representing the Head Mistresses' Association, and was greatly disappointed when the matter hung fire for so many years. Her motive was not only, as she expressed it herself, "to safeguard our children from the incompetency of unqualified practitioners," but to give the

teachers themselves "a professional outlook and definite educational aims." Without any "screaming" for rights or money, she had a very distinct conception of what the teacher's status should be, and, indeed, the woman's status, for it was doubtless this which moved her to work quietly during her Presidency to get the Head Mistresses' Conference to commit itself on the suffrage question. Her thoughtful deeds of practical consideration towards those whose financial circumstances were hard or unjust were many, but her efforts for the "raising" of the profession took the form not so much of agitating for higher salaries as of ensuring first a high standard of efficiency and secondly a means of putting some hallmark on that efficiency.

Training was thus a dominant idea with her, and when she had an idea to be worked out, somehow or other the means came to do it. She had that concrete kind of vision charmingly described as a quality of Mrs. Wilkins in "The Enchanted April." "*I see it so. . . . Oh yes, they will marry—I see them married.*" Miss Woodhouse has told me how she once overheard her mother descanting with delight to a visitor on the attractions of the gooseberry hedge in her garden, and how, on the remonstrance "Why, mother, you haven't got a gooseberry hedge!" the answer was, "*In my mind's eye I have.*" And I doubt not that the hedge soon achieved the most satisfyingly concrete reality.

Certainly Mrs. Woodhouse's schemes for the training of teachers were the outcome of a vision that said: "*I see it so.*" She was wholeheartedly convinced of the desirability of training, and of training in colleges attached to schools, which system she thought secured "a living contact in work and play, a continuous relationship with the pupils, and an insight into the life of the school as a whole"; and her achievements in this way at Clapham, though she would herself be eager to call them the achievements of her "heads of departments," were very remark-

able. These schemes branched out in many directions, for in addition to the already more or less established "post-graduate" courses and kindergarten courses, Mrs. Woodhouse was specially set on good training for teachers of art and of domestic subjects. But whatever the special direction was, the same clear belief lay behind, that efficient training was the thing—the best, if not the only, way to turn out good teachers. Doubts and misgivings have assailed some of us when we have seen mere technical efficiency and picking up of the "tricks of the trade" rob some promising talent of its freshness and spontaneity; or we have grieved, perhaps, to see in some cases the humble seeking for inspiration ousted by professional arrogance. But if doubts such as these ever visited Mrs. Woodhouse, they found no permanent lodging in her mind: she felt sure of her way, and if there were difficulties in it that she did not see, yet the main result justified people's confidence in her "sound intellectual optimism," as Miss Burstall called it after listening to one of her addresses at a Head Mistresses' Association Conference.

But it is time that I tried to summarize a little, to weigh the main mass of Mrs. Woodhouse's educational output, rather than taking up disconnectedly one issue after another. For after all, that which more than anything else "passes in making up the main account" of the work of a head mistress is just her treatment of the average girl—her plans, hopes, and provision for the needs of the average woman. It was in this middle tract of the scholastic way that Mrs. Woodhouse's gifts of sense, balance, judgment, and sympathy told most emphatically. She had, it is true, a great love of scholarship, and a real reverence for the austere calling of exact and concentrated learning. How often have I heard her speak with a sort of sighing envy of the fruits of one or other of the severer disciplines in education—the command of words which comes with patient study of the classics, or the conception of "order on a grand scale" (to use, I think, her own phrase) which the

search for the secrets of the physical universe brings. But she knew well that the great majority are not, and never will be, scholars. Hence, while her eager encouragement was given to the ambitious and vigorous-brained girls (and she *greatly* enjoyed their bringing in a fine crop of University scholarships!), yet a generous outlay of time and strength went on considering how the non-college girl could get such education as would best enrich and develop the powers that must find their scope in an ordinary home life. Her scheme for a more comprehensive training for teachers of the domestic arts was part (and a very toilsome part) of her attempt to meet the needs of such girls. She strongly felt that instruction in these subjects should *not* be framed on the assumption that only poor material would be available. When a committee was first brought together to consider the "Household and Social Science" development at King's College for Women, Mrs. Woodhouse's support was sought, and she sympathized eagerly with their object—to provide education for women "in the principles underlying the proper management of the home and young children, in the hygienic and business-like conduct of institutional life . . . and in the law and economic conditions affecting the administration of charity, the conduct of factories, workshops, and the like."

Also, while she cherished this desire for a methodical and scientific tackling of such problems of domestic affairs as require trained brains, she did not let slip the humbler opportunities as they came along, but kept going, as numbers of other schools have done since, steady courses for the Housewife's Certificate in the more ordinary knowledge required for home life. It used to be called the "Brides-to-be" course, and abundantly justified its name. I fancy that many a man is to-day reaping its fruit in the better ordering of his home, and he all unconscious of whence his blessings flow!

There was also, besides the attention given to the actual domestic subjects, a more general foundation laid

by Mrs. Woodhouse for the education of the "home-life" girl. She followed, and partly evolved, a plan which has by now become a commonplace, but was by no means so then. It was the arranging of an alternative curriculum for the use of girls from sixteen upwards, a wise curriculum which allowed of the drafting off of those on whom mathematics, science, or classics beyond the elementary stage would have been an unprofitable burden, to other types of work. History would generally be the basis of these alternative classes, with much attention to English literature, and a great deal of time spent on one or more of the arts. Mrs. Woodhouse's own great love of these studies, particularly of art and music, made it possible for her to urge such a course with real enthusiasm. Under a more strictly academic head mistress the less scholarly girls often tend to get discouraged; the idea leaks into their consciousness that if they go into "alternative" forms they are being "sent up the back stairs"; but here there was a sincere conviction that both staircases were honourable, and it helped such girls a great deal, encouraging them to develop hopefully such powers as they had.

This same care for the average girl lay, I think, at the back of Mrs. Woodhouse's measures for the physical well-being of those she educated, or, possibly, it was rather a care for the right balance of the elements in the constitution of *every* girl. In the republic of the human personality she would have all the members come to their own; the body must not dominate the mind, but neither must the mind harry the body—and in pursuance of that faith she would drive with fierceness some little round-shouldered book-worm into the garden or the playing-field. I imagine that "physical record" sheets made one of their earliest appearances on the notice boards of Clapham High School. In the matter of medical inspection, too, though Miss Buss was, I believe, the actual pioneer as regards secondary schools, Mrs. Woodhouse

played a very conspicuous part. It was a measure sure to be misunderstood and resented at first; to many, no doubt, it seemed an instance of red-tape tyranny, a personal liberty, a piece of unnecessary silly fuss. But Mrs. Woodhouse held on her way with tact and patience, and with the help of very understanding medical advisers in each of her schools—Dr. Helen Wilson in Sheffield, and Dr. Dorothea Colman (*née* Caine) in London—and of gymnastics mistresses who were skilful in remedial work, she must have saved countless girls from permanently impaired health. “If the Governing Body,” she urged, “was answerable for the intellectual training, it ought to insist that the pupils should be physically fit to receive it.” Games she approved of and liked—that is, in their place and in moderation; but she had no patience with the unbalanced craze for sport which has marked recent years—it seemed to her simply unworthy of rational people. I remember her once looking from the windows at some games being played on Clapham Common at an hour which cut right into the middle of the morning, and sighing impatiently: “And they talk of the inefficiency of England!” She was far too hard and keen a worker herself to tolerate the encroachment of what is meant to recreate the powers till it becomes an obsession absorbing all these powers into itself. Of course, she had the great good luck of having in herself plenty of resources as a make-weight and safeguard against a one-sided absorption in work. Music was all her life an intense joy to her, in her early years even a dominating interest; the music in her schools was wonderfully taught, and about concerts and other entertainments, however much they owed to other ability, Mrs. Woodhouse always exercised her personal judgment with good effect. Her æsthetic taste was fastidious and pure, and this was one of the many ways in which it showed itself. It blossomed out, though, most of all in her love of flowers and gardens, which amounted to a real passion with her. Practically every-

one who knew her well at all knew her as a gardener, for she was not only a garden *lover*, but paid the tribute of real hard work, physical and mental, to the object of her desires. I think the garden-love, as well as being æsthetic, issued partly from her deeper, more dominant love of mothering and protecting. I am sure that she often thought of her girls as human plants, just as she found her plants endowed with an almost human responsiveness—sometimes, too, with a “cussedness” also surprisingly human!

But the love of beauty for its own sake was there emphatically. She loved it in all her surroundings: she did not care to burden herself with too many possessions, but those she had were choice and fitly disposed: they always looked used and loved and cared for, and they spoke of the things of the spirit. She loved animals too, and had various dog and cat friends in her *ménage*. I remember her once saying it was such a comfort that she could spoil “Lady Jane” (her beautiful smoke-blue Persian) without undue worry about the effect on Lady Jane’s soul.

To see Mrs. Woodhouse surrounded by her own home atmosphere, in her flat in Chelsea or in the lovely restfulness of Home Wood, her cottage near Bagshot, was to round off in a very satisfying and sometimes unexpectedly revealing way the impressions conveyed in her busy Monday-to-Friday school life. For it must be frankly avowed that though there was no stagnation where she was, there was also too little pause. The mercurial temperament, the vivid unresting imaginativeness which made her so fully alive made other people at times feel pretty nearly dead! Modern biographers must put in the blame as well as the praise—it is their tribute to an ideal of sincerity—and in the case of a character like Mrs. Woodhouse’s it would be robbing it of individuality to suppress the strongly-marked lights and shades. She had a restless desire to be up and after something else, even before she had quite con-

solidated her gains. She was quite capable of pursuing an *ignis fatuus* now and then, and not only of pursuing it herself, but insisting on being accompanied in the somewhat disorganizing journey. I once asked someone how it was that a certain near and dear friend of Mrs. Woodhouse's kept such a measure of placidity in spite of close proximity to a very whirlwind of energy, and the answer was: "Oh, she's accustomed to being spilt off the cart—she just sits quietly gazing from the middle of the road!"

These little side-lights of comedy are easy to remember, and would be too cheap and trivial to record, but that they throw up the solid background of Mrs. Woodhouse's main habitual dealings with her colleagues, and for that matter with parents and girls too: it was a solid background of magnanimity, courage, wisdom, and humility. How courageous she was in tackling some fault in a woman possibly very much better equipped in the technical sense than herself: how generous in her ignoring of any personal slight or wound: how humble in her dependence on others' gifts! She was singularly good for the deep, complex, subtle natures whose workings are oftenest hidden: for though she had herself her full share of subtlety, it did not run through the deeper levels of her being: there all was simplicity. In her religious faith it seemed to me that she was indeed "as a little child": its immediacy, loyalty, and unquestioningness were so striking. And the unquestioningness did not mean unthinkingness, for she not only thought deeply and constantly on these subjects, but—far more significant—offered a disciplined response in her life to the ideals she cherished. One of her favourite quotations was Dante's "In His will is our peace." Here, as in other things, poise and sane judgment marked her thinking. Her mind always remained open and alive to new ideas, but she would "place" them with a wonderful sensitiveness to their relative importance and significance. Once, in discussing with me various beliefs about the healing of disease,

she said, thoughtfully and simply, "Since God can cure my *sins*, a very much more difficult matter, I cannot doubt that He could heal my diseases too." But one could see that her thoughts left what was to her the minor issue to dwell on the more inclusive and fundamental.

At her staff meetings she would constantly pass on recommendations of books which had helped her: among special favourites, I remember, were Illingworth's "Christian Character," Westcott's "Risen Lord," Inge's "Personal Idealism and Mysticism"; for teaching, she loved Latham's "Pastor Pastorum." But the list could be supplemented to almost any extent, for her reading was rapid and comprehensive. She felt that one's religious life needed a good liberal diet to maintain and nourish it, but the reading had to be trustworthy matter: she would not be "carried about by every wind of doctrine." In spiritual matters, it will be seen, there was no remotest sign of the following of any *ignis fatuus*; she made no mistakes in this region. Sometimes she would speak frankly and anxiously to us if she thought our Scripture teaching was at all vague, or indefinite, or pantheistic: I have heard her say, "My dear, I don't hear very much about the work of Christ." Her own Scripture lessons were, as has been said in one of the Sheffield letters at the end, "always the heart of her work."

During these last few years she was a good deal distressed by the thought of psycho-analytical methods being rashly used in education: she had a deep dread of the results which might follow if unwise or not-too-scrupulous people rushed at the opportunity of experimenting on other (especially on immature) minds. Herself she never, as has been said, "used her personality" with the girls; her deep respect for theirs forbade it. She relied instead on what she would, I think, have referred to simply as the work of the Holy Spirit. I speak in this matter from impression only, not from definitely remembered words, but I think her idea was that if she could by "waiting on the Lord"

absorb an uplifting influence into her own life, she needed not to speculate on how to communicate it. In one of her addresses she has said "Life alone can quicken life"; and, secure that if she caught the flame of inspiration herself, it could not but spread to others, she just simply "pressed towards the mark."

Mrs. Woodhouse died on January 2, 1924, at her beloved cottage at Bagshot, after a very sudden and short illness. On the last Saturday of the old year, a bleak and raw day, she was planting roses in her garden. Characteristically, in her absorption she ignored the chill creeping up from the damp sodden ground, and that night she had an attack of pneumonia of a severity which, from the first, left practically no hope of her recovery. She lived until the Wednesday morning, suffering marvellously little for so distressing an illness, and then passed quietly from this world.

At the memorial service held in St. Thomas', Orchard Street, on the Saturday morning, January 5, beautiful words were both read and spoken suitable to the occasion of her death; but what I would choose as fitly closing this incomplete record is a passage associated with her vigorous life, and setting out in small compass that which was her eager aim during its whole course. The words occur in one of her favourite readings for morning prayers, and many who may read this will, I doubt not, hear in them the echo of her voice that "yet speaketh":—

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

June 1924.

A. S. PAUL.

EXTRACTS FROM MRS. WOODHOUSE'S
ADDRESSES AS PRESIDENT OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF HEAD MISTRESSES
BETWEEN 1907 AND 1909.

*From an Address on "High School Education as a
Preparation for Womanhood."*

THERE, perhaps, has never been a time when it has been so needful for all those who are in any way called to positions of responsibility and influence to make themselves familiar with those aspects of the social problem that are fundamentally educational. For no effective legislation is possible in advance of public opinion, and progress will continue to be slow and halting until the schools do more in creating, in those whose minds they so largely form, a liberal Christian public opinion, which shall not only render advance possible, but hasten it. There is much current criticism of the education we give in our girls' schools, and there are many doubts whether it fulfils its function of "preparation for complete living." The standard of attainment for the average girl who leaves school short of the Sixth Form can scarcely be said to have risen appreciably in the last ten or fifteen years, and in the future we may have to content ourselves with an even lower standard in "bookish" attainment. The increasing disappearance of the line of demarcation between primary and secondary education, though by no means to be regretted, is one factor which will tend to this result in all our public schools. But this somewhat lower standard of attainment reached by the average girl (leaving on one side those whose complete school course

has been followed by University or professional training) need not distress us unduly if we feel we are giving her something of equal value. Not knowledge as such, but "virtuous action as the end of all earthly learning" is the ultimate test of a sound education. I do not wish to undervalue knowledge, but simply to urge the well known truth that true education does not necessarily and universally imply scholarship—that it is not the amount known, but the use made of it, that gives such knowledge as is imparted its vital power. Knowledge that is theoretical only is but half-knowledge; it is not complete until it is related to human experience and life's duties. If the claims of preparation for citizenship are to be met we must reconsider our curriculum. In these days the curriculum must be thought out and defined in relation to the child and its growing activities. The perception of the relation between the two is, of course, our great debt to Froebel and to those who have developed his point of view. Indeed, for the last hundred years, the efforts of most educational reformers have combined to direct our attention to the psychological aspect of education rather than to its purely logical or intellectual aspect. We have learned to look upon education as fundamentally a process of development of child nature, through provision of appropriate environment, rather than as a building up of a certain definite amount of knowledge or body of truth. The one point of view lays stress on the process (unfolding of activity); the other on the end (acquirement of knowledge), as it is generally conceived. But this is not enough. The child does not stand alone, and an individualistic treatment is now seen to be inadequate, even though so much of our social system still bears the mark of individualism. "We are all Socialists now," in education as elsewhere. The Italian Renaissance, with its claim for individual culture and for personal distinction, had to be supplemented by the Reformation movement in Northern Europe, which not only recognized the

inalienable right of every individual as such to education, but, further, saw in education the main hope of social reform and improvement. In the same way, our plea for the completest possible development of the child—whether the process is called primary or secondary education—cannot stop short of the recognition that both the *raison d'être* and the means of personal culture, of self-realization in the true sense, lies in the service of others.

The coping-stone of education consists in the realization of this claim and the fitness to fulfil it, for "through civic institutions alone (as T. H. Green in the past generation was never weary of pointing out) is it possible for the idea of moral perfection to be realized by human beings." Such profound truths as the losing of the life to save it, the greater blessedness of giving than of receiving, are amongst those fundamental principles of our moral and spiritual nature that are "once true, always true"; but perhaps it comes home to us with more force than ever in an age which, whether we regret it or not, is essentially democratic. The destinies of a people are no longer controlled by external authority. Society has come to the adult stage of self-government and self-control, and the claim made on the conscious allegiance and intelligent co-operation of all its members is proportionately greater. In view of all this, one of the greatest needs of our day is to find some way of training our girls for the increased responsibilities and duties of citizenship that more and more come within the sphere of practice and actual life for women as well as men.

Are we, then, to study politics instead of history? Are we to cut ourselves off from the great impersonal world of science, from the whole realm of imaginative literature and art, because they seem remote from our aim? Are we to touch nothing but those subjects whose bearing on practical problems of domestic and wage-earning skill is most obvious? No. Do not let us be utilitarian even for the sake of being practical.

[Here follows a detailed exposition of a reasonable curriculum shaped on the lines indicated in the first part of the book, and a plea for the better training and preparation of teachers on whom, in the long run, so much depends.]

It is evident that all teachers have to deal with mind as such, and the man or woman who sees most clearly the endless possibilities of mind and spirit, and can give a reasoned ground for the hope that inspires every educational effort, is likely to be the best educator. As teachers, it is our business to work through the intelligence to reach the soul. Education has been in many cases too exclusively intellectual, but we are now realizing it in its wider aspect, so finely described by Dr. Murray Butler as "the gradual adjustment to the spiritual possessions of the race"; it must, therefore, be in relation to *all* human needs and aspirations. We want the broadest possible treatment of subjects, when the minds of our girls are opening to the world of thought and action, to enable them to read correctly the social life of our day. We want to give the fullest scope and opportunity to teachers of wide interests and large enthusiasms, who possess a sympathetic insight into the double need—the need of the pupil, on the one hand, and of the waiting world, on the other—and are able to bring the two into vital unity.

It is indeed true that the school world already has great ideals, ideals of justice and love, which are the very foundation of all human life in societies, both small and great. What is still needed, and will always be needed, is to make those ideals so forceful and telling that they shall become part of the very moral fibre of our pupils, and be carried by them into the larger world they will enter when school days are past. It is here that the personality and influence of the teacher is of such paramount importance; our own interests and dominant purpose in life will inevitably make themselves

felt, whether we are aware of it or not. Life alone can quicken life, and the knowledge that is related to living interest at every point will become an instrument and a means not only of self-culture but of social service.

From an Address on "The Future of Girls' Education."

. . . . In advocating this change (*i.e.* the rearranging of the curriculum and time-table for girls who are "not to be made poor copies of those who proceed to the University") I deprecate being considered reactionary. Rather let us make fresh effort that is born of renewed insight in selecting the essentials of our girls' modern environment. . . . I want, not a narrower, but a wider and enlarged conception of the aims of education for our girls. . . . Our congested time-tables have therefore to be reformed with special reference to the majority. It is not, I urge, less work, it is not a lower standard that should be advocated, but rather a fuller, broader, and more practical treatment of fewer subjects. We require more intensiveness in the pursuit of studies once undertaken. . . . I would plead, too, in the second year of this Course for more lectures on subjects of living and dominating interest. . . . In conclusion, may I dwell briefly on what possibly should have preceded the consideration of intellectual forces wherewith we try to mould character to that discipline of the spirit without which our labours are in vain? We have been hearing from many quarters of the desirability of a "new way of life"; with the aspirations which lie behind that proposal I cannot but sympathize. A feeling of despondency is sometimes inevitable when we look upon the lives of many whose school days are over and realize that the woman of twenty-five too often has less of that sense of responsibility and obligation that governed her thought and conduct as an upper school girl. This lack of deeper interests and of the realization of the truer and deeper meanings of things leads one to question whether the discipline of the spirit in the last years of her school days has been as effect-

ual as the development of intellectual power. The professional woman is steadied by the blessedness of work, by its definite aim and purpose, and thereby is safeguarded and guided in her influence.

I do not propose to weigh the general question of the lack of discipline of our girls and boys, whether in the home or school, though in passing I think it must be admitted that there is a general leniency and undue forbearance of faults which are too frequently described euphemistically by names that confuse the issue, alas! to the child's undoing. I would rather here turn to that aspect of discipline which confronts us in the ordering of the lives of our upper school girls as exhibited in the fulfilment of their duties and responsibilities. There I can record with the utmost sincerity my recognition of the continuous renunciation of distractions and pleasures, a renunciation which alone enables them to fulfil the many inevitable claims rightly made upon the elder girl in our public schools. Wherein, then, lies the cause of the easy drifting, the loss of intellectual interest, and the lack of firm anchorage which we see around us? Is it in a measure due to the fact that the ways of service, the use of intellectual power as a means to a definite end, have not been clearly perceived and linked on to that freedom which will follow the more safeguarded and easier discipline of schools? Do we show clearly enough that there is but one answer to human needs, but one way by which we may prevent the highest thoughts from "fading into the light of common day"?

The whole point of gathering together the best intellectual forces in our schools is to show our girls they can bring forth the Fruits of the Spirit only in so far as they can discipline their own spirits, only in so far as they themselves secure an anchorage for right thinking and living, bringing every thought into that subjection which alone gives perfect freedom.



(Elliot & Fry, Ltd.)

1912
Before leaving Clapham



FURTHER APPRECIATIONS AND IMPRESSIONS.

"EDUCATION was certainly the absorbing interest of Mrs. Woodhouse's life, but she was many-sided, keenly interested in people, and ready to enjoy most things. Perhaps next to that came her love of gardening. Several years ago she bought near Bagshot, in Surrey, some acres of land, consisting chiefly of gorse, heather, and fir trees. There a charming cottage was built and she vigorously set about the laying out of a garden. This gave her the greatest delight—a delight that ceased only with life, for she gardened within a few days of her death. A great part of the ground still remains in its original condition, a wood of glorious firs, shady in the hottest summer day; but in front of the house and on either side of it stretched the large garden, and to it she fled from time to time to escape the heat and noise of London. It was occasionally my good fortune to visit her there (as well as in her Chelsea flat), and we always called it 'The Abode of Peace.' There I learnt to see her in many a new light, for she declared she always felt 'different' there. Working among her flowers was a labour of which she never tired, and when I pointed out that the rest after lunch was becoming shorter and shorter, she would say, 'Oh! but I was only admiring my roses.' When urged to do so a little less vigorously, she would only laugh. Indeed we laughed a good deal, often at the merest trifles, for who could be sad in that bird-haunted spot. Even the shy visits of Peter Rabbit and his family called forth no desire for reprisals, though we disapproved of Peter's raids on our salads, and deplored

his lack of discretion. She was entirely contented to be there, and rarely cared to go outside the garden gate, though she knew most of her neighbours and was keenly interested in their doings. Some of these, who had fine gardens of their own, liked to visit her and would offer valuable advice about flowers and vegetables; but she listened with the same rapt attention to humbler friends who gave weighty counsel about fertilizers. She was always learning. She left her garden with regret, and returned to it with joy. One morning, at the end of last September, she went to town for a meeting. The day was a beautiful one and the sunset was marvellous. The air was so still that I could hear her train enter and leave Bagshot Station. I went to the gate to meet her, but as it had grown dark and still no taxi appeared, I concluded that she had missed her train and returned to the house. After a time I heard her step, and there she was, brimming over with the day's experiences. She had chosen to walk all the way from the station and had been thrilled with the wonder of the sunset, the mystery of the twilight, and the quiet fields and woods and, above all, with the silence of the sleeping garden. Her home was there. . . .

"In the evenings we would talk of books. Quite recently she asked me to reread Henley's 'Margaritae Sorori,' and then repeated to herself almost in a whisper its closing lines :—

So be my passing !
 My task accomplished and the long day done,
 My wages taken, and in my heart
 Some late lark singing ;
 Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
 The sundown splendid and serene
 Death."

E. T.

—*Sheffield High School Magazine,*
Spring, 1924.

"By the death of Mrs. Woodhouse the educational world has lost a force which will not easily be replaced. For she was indeed a force, a driving force for all that was highest in her profession. . . .

"Her death came as a shock to her friends. She was so energetic mentally that it was easy to forget her seventy-three years, and a lifetime of devoted service to others had formed the habit of an instant response to every call for help.

"To those who had the privilege of being members of her inner circle of friends it was a constant delight to talk to Mrs. Woodhouse. She was never quite at her best in a public speech, but in ordinary conversation one was alternately dazzled by her power and charmed by her unfailing enthusiasm for the good and the beautiful. She was a genuine artist, sensitive at all points, and this probably explained the many different types of people among her friends. She knew artists, musicians, politicians, members of the clergy, social workers, &c., in addition to the educational people in whose ranks she held so prominent a place. Perhaps one of her most endearing qualities was her humility. 'Yes, my dear, I *did* think so once, but I have come to see that . . . ' A seeker after knowledge, she was always ready to learn, and from anybody. Yet, with all this humility and simplicity, she was an expert judge of character and intellectual worth. To those who satisfied her high standard she gave generous praise, but, even when she blamed, she showed a sympathy which softened the criticism, and many a girl first 'found herself' under the guidance of this wonderful Head Mistress."

E. HOME,

Head Mistress of Kensington High School.

"HAVING worked under Mrs. Woodhouse for a period of about twenty-five years, first in Sheffield and then at Clapham, I am perhaps qualified to write a few words about her. With her death, the world of education has certainly lost one of its most shining lights, and very many of us have lost a beloved and most delightful friend.

"To sum her up, she was great; great of heart and mind, unsparing of herself in every possible activity of life that was for the good of the world and that made for progress. She required much of others, but so inspiring was her personality, that under its influence they discovered powers and gifts previously unknown to themselves, and, with the sense of uplift her belief in them and her leadership gave, were enabled to carry out marvels, rejoicing in the free scope allowed them.

"It is impossible quite to convey the impression her personality made on one—her face, transfigured sometimes with some happy and inspiring idea, so that it might have stood for a pure type of intelligence; then the light, almost a flame, in her brown eyes when they kindled to some thought of beauty or kindliness.

"So ready was she to give her very potent help wherever and whenever it was needed, that one grew to take it for granted, and was never disappointed in her response, and, indeed, got to look upon it as something natural, and to forget that this rule did not always obtain in the outer world. She was entirely without narrowness, and the width of her interests was amazing; nothing of any value failed to arouse her. She was able to give the most minute attention to detail without ever being swamped by it, so that it became ennobled, as it were, and everything one did for her seemed worth doing and worthy of one's best effort; to scamp anything in her service seemed inconceivable, and all service, if done worthily, ranked as worthy with her, from darning a stocking or sweeping a room to the highest flights of

music or literature. She was astonishingly humble about herself and, deep down, simple at heart, and this was most attractive; then she was ever ready to allow for all the good in others. I have never known her impute an unworthy motive to anyone, and, indeed, I think that because of this she drew out the best of all around her.

"Then there was her wonderful faith, not only in individuals, but in the destiny of the human race and in its ultimate progress and perfectibility. Nothing democratic frightened her! She trusted the people, though, here again, she avoided narrowness, and was ready to recognize the good in all classes.

"She lived on her Bible, and I now understand better why, at times, when I was carried away by some modern author, such as Maeterlinck, she referred one back to it, and seemed to wonder that one sought for other guides."

ELSA FRÖBEL.

Edinburgh, May 25, 1924.

"MRS. WOODHOUSE, to my mind, pervades those early years at Sheffield High School, 1878-1890, and perhaps it is characteristic, as an influence, an inspiration, rather than as a personality. I think the tone of the school was very high, and it must have been largely her doing. Hard work, scrupulous honour, good manners, were expected of us, and we understood the expectation so thoroughly that there was never much need to talk about it. Home influences helped in all this, for most of us came from homes where the Puritan tradition was strong. I think what Miss Alger and Mrs. Woodhouse found chiefly lacking were the graces of life. I remember hearing the gibe: 'Oh, you can always recognize a high school girl; she walks in the very middle of the road, and never wears her gloves.' Anyone who knew Mrs. Woodhouse will readily picture the patience and gentle tact

which she brought to that problem. I was a keen scholar, and very careless about personal neatness. Before this defect was corrected, many rebukes were needed; almost daily there was some quiet remark, always brief, and sometimes cutting; but I was never subjected to the humiliation of a public rebuke for this fault.

"I fancy the Scripture lessons were from the first the heart and centre of her work. She lifted us from the letter to the spirit, gave us wide horizons, and some sense of the 'increasing purpose' which lies behind the Bible story.

"We all loved and respected Mrs. Woodhouse, and we had no fear of her. But I cannot recall a trace of *Schwärmerei*, or even an attempt at it. I don't think she ever used her personality with us girls; I am not so sure about the parents!

"Mrs. Woodhouse came often to our house, and she and my parents had deep mutual regard. I remember the eager talks over high tea about politics and educational questions, and how we used to laugh at her engrossment.

"After I went to college, I nearly always went to see her and the school in vacations. I remember with special gratitude one remark at this time. She was always asking what I had read and recommending books. I remarked sadly that I had read such and such books, but was dismayed to find how I forgot them. 'My dear,' she said, 'you don't remember every leg of mutton you have eaten, but they have helped to make you what you are.'

"In the end of 1892 I began medical practice in Sheffield. Mrs. Woodhouse was then recognizing the value of medical examination of schoolgirls, and very speedily enlisted my help. All that we had as a guide was the work previously done at the North London Collegiate School by Dr. Julia Cock, under Miss Buss's head mistress-ship. I appreciated afterwards, even more than at the time, the wonderful tact and wisdom and patience with which parents and doctors were handled by Mrs.

Woodhouse. After some years of it, I remember her saying: 'I've come to see that, whenever there is something wrong with a girl's work or her character, there is always a physical cause, if only we can discover it.' In later years, I think, she would have expressed this differently. While recognizing the association of phenomena, she would have been less certain which was cause and which effect.

"During these years, before she left Sheffield, I saw her frequently, and had long and stimulating talks on all manner of subjects. One night I stayed late—I had more than once risen to go, but sat down again as she started some new topic. At last her maid, a typical Yorkshire woman, tapped at the door and inquired: 'Shall I make up another bed, ma'am?' We both burst into laughter, and, of course, I fled. But the inquiry was genuine, and indicates the free and spontaneous hospitality that reigned in her house.

"Our friendship was not lessened by her removal to London. There was always a hearty welcome for me, and she loved to have news of her old friends and pupils in Sheffield, and, above all, of the welfare of the school. What I chiefly remember (besides her personal kindness) is the vivid interest she showed in all manner of subjects—literary, philosophical, religious. I think she was sometimes disappointed that I could not better follow her swift flight. She was always reaching out for the best, always in search of the true and good.

"The cottage in Surrey was a keen delight. I was with her on the day when we began to clear away the gorse, and when, with her architect, the position of the house was pegged out. What a joy and relaxation that garden was to her! How she would work in the rain, would work by moonlight, and even by lamplight. I shall not forget a bleak February day, in the first winter after the house was built, when she led me round the garden and explained with an almost breathless enthusiasm the glory

that *was going to be*: 'This is my blue border—corn-flowers, Canterbury bells, forget-me-nots, and oh! do you know, anchusa?—and this, my dear, is lilies—beautiful! and here' (pointing to a feeble-looking sapling) 'is a John Downie Crab, the most glorious thing!' I smiled, even while I shivered, when I contrasted the bare brown beds and starved grass with the glowing pictures she visualized. To her joyous faith the lilies had already bloomed. It seemed to me to typify her whole attitude to life. In raw schoolgirls she saw the women that were to be. In crude suggestions and vague hints her intuition flashed to the full-grown scheme which was to make the school of to-morrow. But the intuition, the vision, was always followed up. She put foundations under her castles in Spain. Just as she worked at her garden, even so she worked out every detail of her plans in order that the vision might be translated into reality."

HELEN WILSON, M.D., J.P.

"To those who knew Mrs. Woodhouse, as was my privilege, in her garden as well as in her school, every lovely flower is reminiscent of her, and of her wisdom and thoroughness. She knew just when to prune and cut away, and just when to leave the plant free. She had sure and certain expectations for her flowers and for her pupils. Was this the source of her success as a gardener and as a head mistress? She poured out her words like an April shower. Her sympathy with and understanding of men were perhaps an heritage from her happy married life which was cut so short.

"Speaking as Secretary to the Association, I know that these qualities of hers stood the Association in good stead during the years of her presidency (1907-09), at a time when the Suffragette agitations made organized bodies of women 'suspect' to some degree. Knowing her scarcely at all before her election as President, I

expected and feared a two years of dignified inactivity, if not of standstill, after Miss Gadesden's vigorous presidency. She had not been President two days before I was aware that our little ship was bound for no uncertain port, and would certainly arrive at its destination. Before each meeting of the Executive was held, the President planned the work with careful forethought, and each member of the committee was entrusted with a special piece of business. Thus more members became actively interested in what they had hitherto regarded as somewhat dull academic questions. Nothing that Mrs. Woodhouse touched remained dull.

"Her enthusiasm for the Girls' Public Day School Trust and her pride in its achievement was a testimony to its greatness. Her membership of the Council of the Trust kept her linked with the work of the Association until the very last, and she valued attendance at meetings on account of the added knowledge gained for the service of the Trust. She was always ready to help a young or newly-appointed Head Mistress, and her appreciation of unexpected greatness was generous. If there was one thing which I think she hated it was 'swelled head,' though I would never have dared use such a term to her either verbally or in writing! She realized to the full the poverty of human nature, but she was determined 'to look not down but up.' "

RUTH YOUNG,

Secretary to the Association of Head Mistresses.

"Of all the many contributions that Mrs. Woodhouse made to educational developments perhaps none claims more gratitude than the vital interest she took in art education. This was extended not only to the girls who passed through her schools, but to the teachers who, in numberless schools to-day, are doing happier work because of her vision.

"Mrs. Woodhouse believed, more than anyone I have

ever met, in the influence of beauty on children—and girls, and because she so believed she gave far greater opportunities than is usual to those who were entrusted with the art education of the pupils in her schools.

"She had most unusual perception, and could tell at once wherein the beauty or otherwise of a child's efforts lay, and, indeed, often detected in the drawings some trait of character that had not been revealed before. She could always appreciate the slightest expression of the artistic merit in a girl's work, and in her dear human way would early make an opportunity to express to the girl her pleasure in the beauty she had tried to show.

"Indeed, she herself seemed always in the quest of beauty, not only in works of art, but in the characters of the human beings by whom she was surrounded. For she held life as a unity, and was great enough to realize that in real education there are no compartments of knowledge.

"This keen appreciation of the way in which the love of true beauty led naturally to the ethical development of her girls made her willing to listen to the request to allow young art teachers to be trained in her school. This was an almost unthinkable proposition twenty years ago. Yet, when the suggestion was made to her, she just seemed to see the effort completed. It was like the bare earth-beds of her garden of later years, which, even in the depths of winter, were in her thought gay with the joys of summer flowers. There were no barriers or insuperable difficulties in her thought, and until the end of her life she gave unstintingly her interest and her encouragement to that movement which sought to give to the art teacher a training parallel to that of teachers of other subjects.

"But it was not the mere training in teaching that made it possible to pursue so great a departure from the then tradition, but the realization that life was incomplete without some understanding of St. Paul's admonition:—

“ ‘Whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.’ ”

E. WELCH,
Clapham High School.

June 1924.

PUBLIC REFERENCES.

Resolution passed at a public meeting in the Town Hall of Sheffield, the Lord Mayor presiding, on Mrs. Woodhouse's retirement from the Head Mistress-ship of Sheffield High School in 1898:—

"THIS meeting desires to express its unfeigned regret at the proposed removal of Mrs. Woodhouse from Sheffield, testifies its high regard and esteem for her life and character, and acknowledges the important and far-reaching work which she has done at the High School for over twenty years. The meeting is deeply sensible that Mrs. Woodhouse has been singularly successful in the wise influence she has exercised over the teachers and pupils at the High School, that her efforts have raised the standard of scholastic attainment, and that she has inspired many of her pupils to use their talents for the good of the community. This meeting also warmly recognizes that Mrs. Woodhouse has earned the respect and affection of all with whom she has come in contact by her broad sympathies and readiness to aid varied efforts for the religious, educational, and social advantage of the community."

From the letter of the Bishop of Southwark and Dr. Dunbar, Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively of the Committee for the "Testimonial to Mrs. Woodhouse" on her leaving Clapham:—

"HER services to the higher education of girls are not only to be measured by her long and distinguished administration of schools, but in certain important respects are also to be regarded as those of a pioneer. She originated

many ideals of school life now generally accepted, and by her energy and practical organizing power secured conditions in which these conditions might be realized."

On the occasion, in 1915, of the Presentation of this "Testimonial," which took the form of the "Woodhouse Scholarship," Miss Dingwall, speaking for the school staff, said:—

"In honouring Mrs. Woodhouse there is no difference of opinion. But it is impossible to speak adequately, because Mrs. Woodhouse's Staff—and of the many present to-day numbers are head mistresses—though they felt always the extraordinary attractiveness of her power, yet know that that power eludes analysis. They know her interest and sympathy with all sides, aspects, and grades of school life; they know she had gained all the advantages of a long and distinguished experience without being cramped by it; they know that progress to her involved dissatisfaction and renewed effort. They know her so generous in appreciation of others, so critical of herself, and that to her the experience was familiar of going out to teach and coming home taught. They know her immense vitality, that she both burnt and shone.

"Mrs. Woodhouse has, possibly, many faults, but she was never tedious! She always welcomed fresh experiments, she gave everyone her chance in an atmosphere of freedom and unrestraint, and with regard to the human element.

"In 'the little done, the undone vast,' she liked to speed things up by her special process of ellipsis, and it was sometimes disconcerting to those slower-witted than herself to be given the beginning and the end and to have to supply the middle!

"In contact with her wonderful gift of 'go,' though all

felt quite sincerely that she was the first and the rest by comparison nowhere, yet everyone happily and willingly followed her—'faint yet pursuing!' They saw her power of handling people—not dexterously—that implies over-consciousness, but with a graciousness instinctive and unsought. And they felt she was so young—in the warmth of sympathies, in the freshness of interests, in the hopefulness of enthusiasms.

"Her influence on the School no one could estimate in words. The little learning most of us acquire is easily forgotten. The value of what school teaches is what remains when everything else learned is forgotten. Well, what remains for every member of this School, or of Sheffield High School, who was ever under Mrs. Woodhouse, is—Mrs. Woodhouse. Her lessons were caught as much as taught. She inspired. She handed on the torch."

Miss F. R. Gray, Head Mistress of St. Paul's Girls' School, and President of the Association of Head Mistresses, wrote from Rapallo on January 7, 1924 :—

" . . . IF we had known that dear Mrs. Woodhouse was making her last appearance at the last Executive in November, we could not have had a more beautiful memory of her. As soon as she came into the room I sent her a little note, asking her to congratulate Miss Burstall on being made a J.P. Mrs. Woodhouse never made a more felicitous or charming little speech; it was just right in every way, delightfully playful, and yet evidently heartfelt. None of us will forget it."

*Resolution passed by the Council of the G.P.D.S.T.,
January 30th, 1924.*

"THE Trust has sustained a very heavy loss in the death of Mrs. Woodhouse, and the Council desire to place on record their sorrow and their appreciation of her unique services. The work which she did, first at the Sheffield High School, and then at Clapham, marked her out as one of the great head mistresses of her time, and this was fully recognized by the profession and in the educational world generally. In a wonderfully short time she raised each school to a height of great efficiency and prosperity. At Clapham, in particular, the greatness and rapidity of the change which she effected was quite astonishing. This was the result not merely of professional and organizing ability, but of a love of her work, a sympathy with children, and a remarkable combination of decision with kindness and gentleness. She never lost her interest in the two schools or in her old pupils, whom she vividly remembered as individuals, and with many of whom she maintained an intimate friendship. On retirement, she showed a continued devotion to the work of the Trust, and as a member of the Council's Education Committee, and later of the Council itself, was able to give services which no one else could so well have rendered. Again and again her intimate knowledge of all the Schools and their organization, and of the feeling of the mistresses and of the teaching profession in general, was invaluable in guiding the Council in important decisions, and the loss of her advice and help, given with un-failing readiness, will be long and deeply felt."

*Resolution passed by the Association of Head
Mistresses, February 1924.*

"THE Executive Committee of the Association of Head Mistresses has heard with much sorrow of the death of Mrs. Woodhouse.

"Ever since she joined in 1884, Mrs. Woodhouse had at heart the interests of the Association, and she soon began to take a leading part in its counsels. She became President in 1907.

"All who had the privilege of working with her gratefully recognize that the cause of education is permanently enriched by the fruits of her wise judgment, her conciliatory spirit, her generous encouragement of the work of others, her kindly and discriminating helpfulness, and her steadfast fidelity to the ideal which inspired her."

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS FROM FELLOW
HEAD MISTRESSES, COLLEAGUES, OR
MEMBERS OF MRS. WOODHOUSE'S
STAFF AND OTHERS.

*From Mrs. Woodhouse's colleagues on the Council of
the Girls' Public Day School Trust.*

"How many will mourn her loss! And among these will be all connected with the Girls' Public Day School Trust, to which she gave such devoted service. She will indeed be missed at our Council meetings. She showed there that combination of power and decision with kindness and gentleness, which must, I feel sure, have been the secret of her great achievements as a Head Mistress."

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"It has been a real privilege to work with her. She was always so helpful and so kind. Her memory will live on in the lives of hundreds of women whom she has influenced."

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"I shall never forget Mrs. Woodhouse's many kindnesses, constant encouragement, and great indulgence. By a rare privilege I was brought into close intimacy with her great-hearted and great-minded personality. What we shall do without her I cannot think. . . . She was invaluable as an adviser, through her long experience, her wisdom and sympathy, and her great love of the schools. No labour or trouble was too much for her."

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"I can't say how I miss her. She was always so good to me, and I learnt much from her."

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"She was so unassuming and so appreciative of the

work of others, that one tended to forget the great services she was always rendering. Her courage and her foresight were wonderful."

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"When I think of her wonderful powers of mind, combined with such sympathy and a charity that 'never failed,' I feel proud and thankful to have been honoured by her friendship."

From Head Mistresses closely associated with Mrs. Woodhouse on the Executive of the Head Mistresses' Association.

"From her I gained innumerable lessons of wisdom and good sense . . . a wonderful impression of a personality almost unique. She was truly 'luciferous'—she passed on the torch lighted by Miss Buss and the early pioneers. She always struck me as one of those who had really faced life and grown up fully! she had *used* her experiences. She was an encourager; a new thing had a good chance with her. Without seeming to watch or penetrate, she was a most shrewd judge of character, and always a tolerant and sympathetic one; she kept hold of threads of explanation as to real motives."

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"I admired and honoured dear Mrs. Woodhouse, and had the privilege of her friendship. Indeed, only a few days ago I wrote to her for that wise advice and sound counsel she gave so many. . . . For herself one ought not to mourn; she is saved from the weakness of old age, that sad enfeeblement of powers and slow decay of the body which is so distressing. She has secured release, and her beautiful spirit is happy in that strange eternal world we can so little understand. . . . What fine

work she did, not only in her two schools, but for the head mistresses and for the G.P.D.S. Trust."

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"the grief which I feel in common with so many to whom she had endeared herself by countless tokens of sympathy and acts of kindness. It is no exaggeration to say that the world feels a lonelier, emptier place now that that bright enthusiastic loving spirit is withdrawn from us. . . . Up to the last she was as full as ever of interest, vitality of mind, sympathy, and affection."

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"She was so accessible, so easy to talk to, and so ready to help. Doubtless she could be severe when necessary, but in ordinary life that characteristic was hidden away, and love and kindliness radiated from her. I can never forget her great kindness to me. . . . She seemed to me absolutely unique."

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To one extract must be added the name of the writer, Miss Berryman, Head Mistress of Notting Hill High School, one of Mrs. Woodhouse's former Staff at Clapham. The words gain a pathetic interest from the fact that, in less than three months after they were written, Miss Berryman, too, had "passed on." Her death, after a very short illness, was a great shock to her school and her many friends. She writes:—

"Mrs. Woodhouse will always be a wonderful memory. It was not only that her intellect and vision made her one of the great of the earth, but her singular child-likeness and simplicity and love made her greatness so lovable, and all her personality so inspiring, that to think of her will always be to renew the charm and vital force, and she will never cease to 'speak.' It is a wonderful thing to have known her."

From fellow Head Mistresses and members of staff.

"At the last Conference we rejoiced in her vitality and enthusiasm. She was, as she has always been, like a sparkling mountain stream, giving life. How many must rise up and call her blessed!"

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"The world is a different place now—that burning light of enthusiasm for all that was good quenched. How I loved her, and how little I was ever able to put into words what I owed her!"

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"As young mentally at seventy-three as she was twenty-five years ago when I first met her, when I was first thrilled by the sound of her beautiful voice! And to think that I am only one of countless others who must have felt the same. What a power she had, and with what discretion she used it! Service for a cause was all she ever asked. Her eagerness and hopeful outlook are a permanent possession for those who loved her."

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"Her wide interests and influence have continued to the very end. I think that few women have done so much for their fellows."

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"Her extraordinary and sympathetic kindness to me personally was always a matter of astonishment and gratitude, seeing that I had no claim on her but the bare official one. But her kindness was never official, always discriminating and human. It seemed to overflow on all about her without stint, and as though it were no effort. I suppose it was so characteristic and spontaneous that it was no conscious effort, but she must have simply poured her spirit out for other people all her life."

"the love and pride and gratitude that must always be linked with her and the thought of her."

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"her kindness and thoughtfulness and her far-reaching sympathy. I am proud to have been one of Mrs. Woodhouse's staff."

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"There can be few who had a more precious and wonderful influence than she had."

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"We who had the great privilege of knowing her and serving with her in the cause of education to which she was so devoted, will have cause to revere her memory and emulate her example. I owe more to dear Mrs. Woodhouse than I can ever express."

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"I think those of us who had the privilege of working with her have never lost the tremendous sense of her generous strong personality, which seemed to pour fresh vitality into everything she touched. What I owe to her inspiration is quite immeasurable. Petty things seemed to disappear when looked at through her eyes, and the cheerful buoyancy of her outlook, tempered with a very tender and wise understanding of weaker minds than her own, helped one over many rough places. I am thankful to have known and loved her."

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"We remember with gratitude the last time we saw her; when she had gone we said to each other that we were richer for the hour or two we had had with her; we always felt like that after seeing her. She had no period of disablement, no break in her beautiful life of service. That was what one could wish for her. The keen full life will go straight on."

"All these years she has been the kindest mother-like friend, always so vitally interested in all our affairs, and doing so much for us. We owe everything to her, and have always felt it. Never shall we find such a friend again."

From Old Pupils and other friends.

"She seemed to be ageless. Hers was a wonderful life, and surely a very happy one. I remember she once said to me how applicable to the teaching profession were the words: 'They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever,' and how this does apply to her!"

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"I cannot recall ever seeing her waste one moment in any form of idleness, and what a mass of work achieved belongs to her record. . . . Words are inadequate to show a tithe of what her faith, her inspiration, her reproofs, her encouragement, her wide interests and sympathy, meant to me. The privilege of having lived with her I have always put above every other advantage I have received."

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"A wonderful life right up to the end, full of ungrudging service. Her presence dominates one's mind; it was so full of vitality and hope."

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"One of the most remarkable women of her time. I do not think one could exaggerate the extent of her influence."

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"Anything of good there is in me to-day I owe almost entirely to her, and I can think of no more fitting words than these: 'Give her of the fruit of her hands,

and let her works praise her in the gates.' . . . I hear she was planting roses in the garden on Saturday—well, I am sure gardens don't end here, and all is well with her."

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"her wonderful power of making one count one's blessings instead of grouching. If only everybody had followed her example of 'passing on' the good, how much happier this poor old world of ours would be."

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"I owe her a debt which I cannot calculate for all she taught me and gave me in my girlhood. She taught us so many things—the value of a high standard of truth and honour, of courtesy and discipline, and of service—lessons which I do not think any of us ever forgot, however badly we carried them out, because she was always there, living out her own principles, and showing us how it could be done. And after we had left we always felt that her friendship was still ours; she never forgot any of us, or ceased to be interested in what we were doing—it is a great thing to have known anyone with such a large heart."

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"I owe everything I have been able to do in my life to her wonderful inspiration and careful training. I have a grateful memory of a loving influence which has endured all my life and will to the end. One's sorrow is tempered by the knowledge of that higher fuller life to which she has passed, and of which she so often spoke to us when we were girls at school."

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"the great crowd of Old Girls who, like me, owed everything they were worth in life originally to Mrs. Woodhouse, and who, like me, judge from her standpoint. 'What would Mrs. Woodhouse think of this?' I have often asked myself, and so must countless others

who look back upon her wonderful insight, her clear judgment, her loving confidence, with intense gratitude, and a great desire to be worthy of having been her pupil."

"I shall always remember our association in Sheffield, and never forget her constant help and encouragement to me, nor her work for Sheffield. Nearly all our old friends of those days have crossed the bar, all with records of service behind them."

"The longer I knew her the more I got to feel what a notable influence she exercised on the higher education of girls. Her tireless energy and her high ideals must have been a constant inspiration to all who came in close contact with her. Without question, she has been a really great head mistress."

A friend "remembers her in her garden, tending the flowers as if they had been human souls, ministering to their needs with rare understanding and love for beauty and helplessness; always gentle, always giving of herself."

*From Sir Michael Sadler, University College, Oxford,
January 28, 1924.*

"I wish to express my sorrow at Mrs. Woodhouse's death, and my deep admiration for her life and work. To her, in a signal way, we in the West Riding owed the acceptance of a new ideal for girls' education. She won the heart of Sheffield and of all who knew her, and by her insight and charm did much that had to be done in an uncultivated soil. No one but could wish that their daughters might grow up like her and under her influence. She was very wise and very persuasive, and a pattern for all of us who have duties in any way like hers."

As a fitting close I am glad to be able to quote the tribute of Miss Major, King Edward's School, Birmingham, at the Jubilee Conference of the Head Mistresses' Association on June 13, 1924 :—

"Mrs. Woodhouse's work was too many-sided for adequate comment. What was there in girls' education that she did not touch, and what did she touch without improving? Though I never worked in either of her two great schools she was my nearest neighbour for eleven years while I was at Putney, and to Mrs. Woodhouse such nearness necessitated kindness.

"I recall one of my first visits to Clapham, when the present fine building had just begun, and the school, increasing rapidly in numbers, was working in five separate houses—not all close together. I remember following Mrs. Woodhouse rapidly through attics dignified by the name of Form Rooms, and containing more girls than one would have thought it possible to put in the space. Luckily, the Board of Education was still in swaddling bands, too young to calculate, too shy to insist on the exact number of cubic feet actually required by a girl in a Secondary School. Then came the opening of the new building, and in quick succession the various training departments. At the same time, she was introducing regular medical inspection of the girls and a scheme of music teaching to small groups of little children. Many other things I have forgotten, but the impression of vital force which came from Clapham is unforgettable. It is an amazing record, but it is the least part of Mrs. Woodhouse. So often nowadays the office swallows up the person and the real self is sacrificed on the altar of efficiency. With her the official side was the least often seen. Her greatest gift was the power of seeing or creating ability in others. During her Presidency she was continually finding and bringing forward those who had not yet had the opportunity—or perhaps the wish—

to serve the Association. She was never happy unless sharing her successes, and such was her magnetism that, unlike most pioneers, she was never without companions who joined, breathlessly at times, in her swift flight towards an ideal.

"Words blur the memory of that beautiful gracious woman, whom to know was to love. She met death as she met life, swiftly : in our memory of her there must be not one regret, nothing but thanksgiving."









Woodhouse, Mrs.

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